

CALIFORNIA~JAPAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

*from Golden Gate
to Golden Pavilion*

2005 REPORT



2005 California – Japan Scholars Program Report

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Chairman's Report

GREGORY P. SCHMIDT, CHAIR

The California International Relations Foundation is pleased to present the 2005 report of the California-Japan Scholars Program. This year's summary of activity comes with a great amount of gratitude for the organizations and individuals who have worked so hard to make our exchange efforts a continuing success.

2005 consisted of two outbound programs to Shizuoka, Japan composed of students from the Martinez and Palos Verdes High Schools. Additionally, the Foundation was honored to host students from Osaka, Japan, in the Elk Grove Unified School District.

While abroad, program participants from Martinez and Palos Verdes were immersed in Japanese culture from the moment they arrived. While attending daily high school classes, students quickly appreciated the busy schedule of a Japanese student. Along with experiencing daily life with a Japanese host family, students were offered a unique opportunity to explore the beauty and many cultural interests that Japan offers, including visits to Tokyo, and Mt. Fuji, among others.

This year's inbound program had Elk Grove play host to students from Osaka. Attending classes in local high schools, Japanese students were also offered a look into a

California's student life. Organized field trips included a visit to the State Capitol, the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, and the State Railroad Museum in Sacramento.

Fortunate to have both an outbound and inbound exchange this year, our Foundation is encouraged by the demonstration of the Scholars Programs strength. With an alumni group approaching 600 participants, the California-Japan Scholars Program is achieving goals and eager to continue into the future.

On behalf of the California International Relations Foundation, I would like to thank everyone who has made the Program a success to date: the California State Senate, Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata for his leadership, and the Consulate General of Japan for its commitment of time and energy. I also would like to thank the Martinez, Palos Verdes, and Elk Grove Unified School Districts and Shizuoka and Osaka Prefectures. In addition, I would like to extend great appreciation to the corporate sponsors and community leaders whose generosity have provided the essential program funds and Foundation Board Members for their contribution to the success and continued expansion of the program.

Our Sponsors & Supporters

PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT

Japan Airlines

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PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT

Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante

Attorney General Bill Lockyer

California State Senate

California Senate Office of International Relations

Elk Grove Unified School District

Martinez Unified School District

Palos Verdes Unified School District



Embassy of Japan

Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco

Osaka Prefectural Government

Shizuoka Prefectural Government

Thanks for making it happen!

The Beginning

The California – Japan Scholars Program was established by statute in 1996 following a Senate delegation visit to Japan the previous year to strengthen economic relations between this State and one of our leading trading partners. Then-President pro Tempore Bill Lockyer and other members of the delegation met in Tokyo with Ambassador Walter Mondale. The former Vice-President suggested that our great challenge in perfecting the US – Japan partnership arose not from economic imbalances, but from an imbalance in understanding. He noted that Japan for decades had invested in international education programs for its students, while comparatively few Americans were afforded

an opportunity to study in Japan. The ambassador suggested that California's best contribution to US – Japan relations might be the establishment of an aggressive student exchange program that would serve as an example for the rest of the nation. Upon the delegation's return, legislation by Assemblyman John Vasconcellos under AB 2902 established the California-Japan Scholars Program.

Successive annual visits to Japan by members of the California Legislature have built upon this strong foundation by demonstrating California's continued commitment to increasing international education opportunities with her partner in the Pacific.



above: March 18 – 26, 2005, the California Senate Delegation poses in front of the Japanese Diet (national legislative building). Pictured from left to right are Assemblymembers Alan Nakanishi (1st) and Fran Pavley (4th), Senator Sheila Kuehl (5th, front), Senator Alan Lowenthal (6th, front) and also CIRF boardmembers Kevin Kinnaw (5th, rear), Scott Keene (6th, rear) and George Steffes (7th, rear).

left: Senator Kuehl presents the Prefectural Governor of Shizuoka, the Honorable Yoshinobu Ishikawa, with a Senate Resolution celebrating the special relationship between our two states.

The Legislation

An act to add Section 48054 to the Education Code, relating to pupils.
[FEBRUARY 22, 1996]

AB 2902, Vasconcellos. Pupils.

Existing law, the Uniform Supervision of International Student Exchange Visitor Placement Organizations Act of 1994, requires international student exchange visitor placement organizations to register with the Attorney General, as specified, and to provide certain information to participating students, host families, and school districts. Existing law authorizes a



above: Senator John Vasconcellos addressing California – Japan scholars in the Capitol.

school district to require proof of registration with the Attorney General from any organization seeking to place an international student exchange visitor, as defined, in the school district as a condition to agreeing to enroll that student.

This bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement a plan to help achieve the objectives in a specified agreement between the United States and Japan providing for the educational exchange of high school pupils. The bill would state the intent of the Legislature that the plan be developed and implemented no later than June 1, 1997. The bill would require costs of the plan to be funded through donations from the private sector. The bill would prohibit the appropriation of state funds to the State Department of Education for the purpose of developing and implementing the plan.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 48054 is added to the Education Code, to read:

48054. (a) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop and implement a specific plan to help achieve the objectives contained in the April 17, 1996, Joint Statement between the United States and Japan providing for the educational exchange of high school pupils between the two countries. The plan shall include ways to best utilize the strong cooperative relationship between California and the Osaka Prefecture that was established pursuant to the Cooperation Agreement dated November 15, 1994, between the State of California and the Prefecture of Osaka.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the plan be developed and implemented no later than June 1, 1997.

(c) The costs of the plan shall be funded through donations from the private sector. No state funds shall be appropriated to the State Department of Education for the purposes of developing and implementing the plan required pursuant to subdivision (a).

How Does it Work?



left: Palos Verdes students having fun at an outing in Shizuoka.

The California-Japan Scholars Program provides an all-encompassing approach to education, economics, geography and history in a two-week long summer program that teaches participants about global transportation, communications, currency exchanges and culture, as well as building a basis for language acquisition.

During the program, participants from California and Japan attend classes at local high schools and other educational institutions and stay with host families. Students embark on field trips, events and sporting activities designed to build cooperation, communication and understanding between our two regions.

Local California school districts select student participants based upon their own criteria, which can include a personal essay, academic record, interest in Japan and willingness to host a Japanese student from a reciprocal inbound delegation. Since 1997, the Foundation and its partner school districts have exchanged over 600 students between California and Japan. California students have had the opportunity to visit and interact with their counterparts in several prefectures in Japan, including Osaka, Saitama, and Shizuoka.

“For young Californians, early interaction with Japan provides a wealth of opportunity. For some it’s a gateway to Asian culture and the chance to draw contrasts with an education grounded in non-western civilization. For others, it’s a chance to observe, wonder and compare societies that differ much from our own.”

– Cruz Bustamante, Lieutenant Governor
State of California

“There is an expression in Japan: ‘send the child you love on a journey.’ This saying expresses the importance of enjoying various experiences during one’s youth. I was delighted to see high school students from California and Shizuoka sharing in creating their own special memories during this California Scholars Exchange Program. I am certain these memories will remain their lifelong treasures.”

–Masachika Suzuki
Vice Governor, Shizuoka Prefecture



above: Students from Martinez sharing a funny moment with their host sisters in Japan.

Martinez to Shizuoka



left: Ryan, Kaitlyn and Taylor, students from Martinez, learn from their hosts how to use the bow and arrow.

During the summer of 2005, sixteen students and two chaperones visited Shizuoka and were hosted by Mishimakita and Yoshiwara High Schools. During their stay, they enjoyed the opportunity to experience home hospitality, learned about local customs and food, and made new friends. They attended class daily at the schools, where they studied Japanese calligraphy, karate and archery and participated in various other activities. On weekends, they went on daytrips to various places, including Tokyo and Kyoto, with their host families.



above: Students from Martinez and Palos Verdes pose with teachers and chaperones in front of the famous Mt. Fuji.

Martinez to Shizuoka



“Through this trip, Japan has become my second home. I have grown deep connections with the people I have met and lasting relationships with my new friends and family. I will never forget the wonderful people I have encountered or the valuable lessons I have learned.”

– Ryan, Martinez High student

“The exchange this year was wonderful! The 16 American students I was privileged to accompany were all enthusiastic and I much enjoyed sharing in the excitement of all their new discoveries. They participated in kendo, archery and Japanese calligraphy as well as helping with various English lessons. What sticks out in my mind was the ‘talent show’ organized by Kajiwarasei of Mishimakita high school. During the show, the American students were able to showcase their talents and introduce their hosts to American culture, which is distinguished more than anything else by its variety. Erica did a gymnastics / contortion routine that won’t soon be forgotten; Ryan showed off his breakdance moves; Shea and Sara clicked up their heels in Irish dance and Ben led the quartet in a rendition of the Japanese elephant song – in Japanese, of course. The warm welcome we were shown by our Japanese hosts just got warmer and more familiar as the days went by. The friends made, the experiences shared, the new discoveries – all this adds up to an experience in intercultural understanding that will stay with the participants all their lives.”

– Dennis Gray, coordinator & teacher, Martinez

“It was a great learning experience for all ages. There are not only cultural experiences, but social and living experiences. I loved living with a different family. The people in Japan were so nice to me.”

– Samantha, Martinez High student

“This trip has been so amazing! My host family was so nice, and they made sure I felt right at home. At Mishima Kita High School we learned so much about Japanese culture. I was expecting to have a really hard time communicating with the students, but we got along so well despite our differences. I will never forget this experience.”

– Sarah, Martinez High student



Palos Verdes to Shizuoka



*left and below:
Palos Verdes students
practicing calligraphy and
origami – the Japanese art
of paper folding – during
their daily classes at the
local high school.*



During the summer of 2005, eight students and two chaperones from Palos Verdes visited Shizuoka, alongside the Martinez group, and were hosted by Nichidai-Mishima High School. They also had the opportunity to enjoy home hospitality, experiencing first-hand various local customs, foods, culture and rituals. Their daily school schedule included activities such as Japanese calligraphy, martial arts, a day trip to Tokyo, a visit to an attraction park with roller coasters, a stay at a beautiful Japanese lodge and other fun activities.

Palos Verdes to Shizuoka

“Many of the customs and polite phrases I had learned helped me throughout my day. And occasionally I would surprise my host family because I knew something they thought I did not know. Observing and living with my host family helped my communication and socialization skills which for me is very hard. I hope I will be able to see my host family again since I've gotten so close to both them and their friends.”

– Arianna, Palos Verdes High student

“The California – Japan exchange program has been an invaluable and enriching experience for all of us from Palos Verdes High School. During our visit to Japan, we learned a tremendous amount about Japanese culture, history, and customs. Our hosts were extremely hospitable. Host families and school administrators were thoughtful of our every need, and made extra efforts to ensure our comfort and enjoyment. Many of us are still in contact with the host families, and we look forward to receiving Japanese visitors next year. Our students will cherish this unforgettable experience for a long time.”

– Mr. Anu Sood, parent / chaperone,
Palos Verdes High

“At first things were difficult, especially with the language barrier, but after a short introduction period our true personalities began to show. I began to feel so comfortable that it was as if they had become my family. Living in another culture enabled me to realize how much life can change just across the ocean. I leave this trip sad but glad. I'm glad to have experienced something that has truly changed my life, yet sad to leave my new friends and family.”

– Robert,
Palos Verdes High student



above: Students from Palos Verdes pose with their hosts from Nichidai-Mishima high school during their farewell gathering.

“This trip has to have been the most interesting experience of my life. Entering Japan put me into complete culture shock. I often found it hard to adhere to new customs and expectations, but simply being in the midst of customs unfamiliar to me was enthralling. Despite all the differences between me and the people of Japan, they treated me very warmly and with compassion. This trip established unforgettable relationships for me, and really made me come to understand that friendship does extend beyond cultural boundaries. I will never in my life forget the experiences I have had in Japan, and will cherish them for as long as I live.”

– Brenton,
Palos Verdes High student

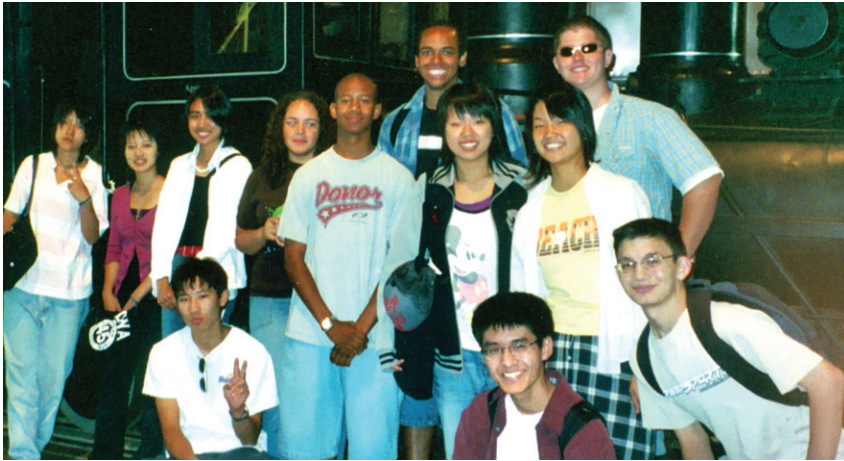
Osaka to Elk Grove

Elk Grove High School students welcomed their friends from Japan to their hometown for two weeks. Students and chaperones from Osaka had the opportunity to experience the California lifestyle. While staying with host families, the students attended classes at Sheldon High, studying the English language, and California's history and government. Organized cultural activities included visits to San Francisco, the Japanese Consular residence, the California State Capitol and the State Railroad Museum, among many other activities.



above: Consul General of Japan in San Francisco, The Honorable Makoto Yamanaka hosted a reception for the Scholars in San Francisco. Here, pictured center, he listens on as one of the students recounts her exchange experience.

Osaka to Elk Grove



“Before my visit to America I was worried about feeling homesick and that I would not enjoy staying with a host family. However, my family was very nice and I made many new good friends, now I do not want to go back home. I understand English much better now and I have learned many new things about California.”

– Tomoyo, student, Senri High School, Osaka, Japan

“When I was told I was to act as an ambassador to Japan, representing California, I was excited, sure, but I soon started to realize that that holds a great responsibility, and you are greatly affecting an entire group of peoples’ perception of the US. The same realization occurred while hosting a Japanese ambassador. What I was to show her about our culture would entirely shape her perception of who Americans are. I am so grateful for being able to see into another’s entire culture, and to gain an understanding of truly the world beyond politics and what I hear on the news, but to its core. I was able to meet, and shake the hand of the ambassador of Japan, an opportunity other may have overlooked.”

– Julia, student, Elk Grove USD

“Summer 2005 was another successful and fun-filled exchange program. I was pleased to see how our American students demonstrated pride and open-mindedness as they assisted the Japanese students in the classroom and on field trips. There was much sadness when it was time for the Japanese students and chaperones to say goodbye. I want to thank all those who contributed to this program.”

– Ikuyo Sanchez, teacher, Elk Grove USD



“The program is a great tool in integrating cultures and helping everyone involved succeed in expanding their range of knowledge. In addition, it has also helped me to establish many new friendships which I hope will last throughout my lifetime. As long as the program continues to thrive, the students are being offered a true opportunity of a lifetime.”

– David, student, Elk Grove USD

2005 Capitol Reception



On Tuesday, July 26, 2005, the California International Relations Foundation honored its ninth generation of California – Japan Scholars at a reception in the Governor’s Council Room. The students were able to share their experiences with the public, California’s legislators, Japanese government officials and the program’s corporate sponsors.

above: Dr. Steven Ladd, Superintendent of the Elk Grove Unified School District, addresses the crowd.



left: Japanese student participants exchange stories in the Governor’s council room.



below: 2005 participants posing on the Capitol steps.

2005 Capitol Reception



left: Assemblyman Dave Jones, who represents parts of the Elk Grove Unified School District, welcomes the students to the Capitol.

below: The Deputy Consul General of the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco, the Honorable Mr. Kazuyoshi Yamaguchi, shares some thoughts with the participants.



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Japanese students get a taste of Elk Grove

Exchange students visit Elk Grove school district as part of state program

By Cameron Macdonald
Citizen Staff Writer

Carolyn Shinozaki said that many Japanese students emotionally evolve when they spend two weeks in Elk Grove. "They're shy and then they start opening up and then they cry," she said about the end of their visits, laughing. "They want to stay longer. It's very difficult to put them back on the bus."

The Japanese language teacher at Sheldon High School recalled that behavior from many years of coordinating the visits of Japanese students to Elk Grove every other summer.

Milling around Shinozaki were students putting away the refreshments, chairs and welcome posters from the ceremony that welcomed more than 40 students and teacher chaperons from Osaka, Japan inside Sheldon High's gym on July 23.

The students came as part of the state's California-Japan Scholars Exchange Program, where youth from both lands visit each other's countries for a few weeks during the summer. Last year, more than 25 Elk Grove students visited Osaka.

Exposing students to different cultures, and fostering understanding, has been the mission of the Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) for the eight years during which it has participated in the program.

"It gives the students the opportunity to widen their perspectives and their minds," said Paul Somerhausen, a program consultant for the California Senate Office of International Relations.

Somerhausen recently returned from a trip to Japan with exchange students from the Martinez Unified School District. He said that Elk Grove is a "flagship" school

district for the program.

While the state helps coordinate the program, all of the expenses are paid by private donors, including Toyota and Union Bank of California. During the welcoming ceremony, much credit went to district Administrative Assistant Cheryl Wilken, and teachers Shinozaki and Ikuyo Sanchez, for their work to make the Elk Grove exchange with Japan possible.

Somerhausen said that the idea of the program stemmed from a 1997 state delegation trip to Japan, where U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Walter Mondale, told them that Japan-California relations needed to be strengthened.

"He said that there was a breach in understanding between the two cultures and the best way to fix that would have the youth understand each other through exchanges like these," Somerhausen explained.

This summer, Japanese students will take low-key classes at Sheldon and Laguna Creek high schools in "survival English" where they will learn phrases to help them introduce themselves and shop in America, Shinozaki said. Both she and Sanchez will have Elk Grove student chaperons chat with the visitors in English.

The teaches will also give the Japanese students an overview of California and Elk Grove history, while Sanchez will have students experience a "mock Christmas" where they will see a fake Christmas tree, eat traditional holiday dishes, and exchange gifts, along with singing and dancing.

The visiting students have already been taken on field trips, including a visit to Sacramento, where they toured the capitol building and saw the governor's "smoking tent" where he often holds outdoor meetings and smokes his cigars.

Wilken said that a reception was held at the capitol, and Assemblyman Dave Jones and Mukoto Yamanaka, the Consulate General of Japan, welcomed them. The students also visited Yamanaka in San Francisco on Aug. 2.

Before the Japanese students arrived from the San Francisco International Airport in a charter bus, more than two dozen EGUSD students who were set to host visitors, anxiously waited outside the Sheldon High gym, along with their parents.

Parents Bob and Mary McCoy said that this is their third year of hosting a Japanese student, and their son Nic Groves plans to visit Japan next year. Both parents see the student exchange as a great benefit to the hosts and visitors.

"This is a good way to make him more worldly and better rounded," Mary said about her son.

Mary also said that living with a host family pushes English speaking.

"They're forced to learn American English, because the tendency is that if they stay together (with other classmates), they'll want to speak Japanese with each other."

Mary, and her husband Bob, a social science teacher at T.R. Smedberg Middle School, said that they hosted very mature and respectful visitors who, deep down, are still teenagers.

Daniel Mah, a Laguna Creek High graduate, said that his family is hosting two teacher chaperons as they have long enjoyed accepting visitors in the exchange program; they once took a student to Yosemite.

"It's all new to them, so they're really amazed, even by the simple things," Mah said.

Sarah Treanor, a student



High school students and parents wave at a bus of Japanese exchange students and teacher chaperons driving into Sheldon High School on July 23. The visitors came to stay with their hosts in Elk Grove for two weeks as part of a California-Japan student exchange program.

chaperon from Monterey Trail High, mentioned that the girl she will host had promised to teach Treanor how to play basketball. "She's going to teach me how to play basketball and I'm going to teach her how to speak English," she said.

Treanor hung out with other hosting students who shared their appreciation of the Japanese culture's deep connection to religion and commitment to school.

The Japanese students arrived in street clothes that were similar to what the American students wore. Later they sat before their host families inside the gym during the welcome reception.

"I have confidence that your experience with us over the next two weeks will be one in which we will learn from you, and hopefully you will be able to learn from us, and we will broaden our experiences together," Dr. Steven Ladd, EGUSD superintendent, told them.

Osaka Jyogakuin High's Vice Principal, Soichi Inoue, described how Elk Grove is similar to Osaka in that both cities are neighbors to capitals, as his hometown is near Kyoto, the former capital of Japan.

During his speech, Somerhausen recalled his experience of eating exotic Japanese delicacies like fermented beans during the Martinez district's trip to Japan.

"I hope that you'll have the same open mind to food as we did in Japan," he quipped.



Students visiting from Osaka, Japan get off the charter bus from San Francisco as they meet their hosting families.

CJSP In the News

Osaka Youth Learn About Life in Elk Grove in California Japan Scholars Program

By KATHY AOKI
Nichi Bei Times

For Yuusuke Manno this is an experience he will never forget.

"I enjoy going to class to learn English," he said.

Manno, 16, from Sakai, Japan, was one of 27 students from Osaka, Japan, who is participating in the California Japan Scholars program where the students spend two weeks in Elk Grove, a city south of Sacramento. They arrived on July 23 and will leave for Japan on Aug. 6.

The Japanese students and their chaperones attended a reception held at the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco on Aug. 2. They were accompanied by the some of the American coordinators of the program and students whose families who hosted them from Elk Grove.

Manno gave a message representing the Japanese students from Japan, while Hiroko Watanabe spoke for the American students from Elk Grove.

"I know people want to know where is Elk Grove," said Carolyn Shinozaki, one of the coordinators of the program. "This is the eighth year we have had a student exchange with students from Osaka."

Shinozaki is proud to state there are eight high schools and two middle schools that offer Japanese in their curriculums in the area.

Shinozaki, a world language teacher who teaches Japanese at Sheldon High School and Smedberg Middle School, has been involved from the start. She said there are only 14 Japanese American students in the Elk Grove Unified School District. The students and families living in that school district have been open to hosting youths from Japan.

During their stay in Elk Grove, the Japanese students attend classes at Sheldon or Laguna Creek High Schools, take field trips including to Old Sacramento and San Francisco, and had the opportunity to visit the State Capitol where they met some legislators.

Karen Miwa, 17, from Osaka City was enjoying her time in this program. She had visited the United States before but this was her first time in San Francisco. Miwa enjoys basketball.

Several American students commented that this program gave them a chance to learn more about how Japanese youth live in Japan, expose them more to Japanese culture and helped them practice their Japanese.

Hiroko Watanabe, who will be a sophomore at Laguna Creek High School, said she heard about this program through her Japanese teacher at school. Her family has taught her to respect diversity and to cherish her Japanese heritage.

This program offered Watanabe the chance to help strengthen her ties between the U.S. and Japan. She looks forward to going to Japan next year.

"I envy the opportunity these students from Japan have," said Makoto Yamanaka, the consul general of Japan in San Francisco. "When I was your age I dreamed about going abroad but there were no opportunities to do so. I came to the United States for the first time when I entered the Japanese Foreign Office when I was 26. Today there are many opportunities for you to come to the United States."

Yamanaka stressed the importance of building strong relationships between people from both Japan and the United States. He thinks student exchanges are a positive way for young people to learn about each other's culture and history.

This program began nine years ago when four influential California state legislators met with then-U.S. Ambassador to Japan Walter Mondale. The legislators agreed with Mondale's suggestion that California's best contribution to helping to foster U.S.-Japan relations was to have a program where more American youths could experience Japanese and its culture.



TRANSPACIFIC EXCHANGE —
Consul General of Japan in San Francisco Makoto Yamanaka (above) addresses the students

RIGHT: Students from both the U.S. and Japan mingle.

photos by Kathy Aoki/
Nichi Bei Times



Former California state Assemblyman John Vasconcellos proposed a law which created a high school exchange program. His bill received bipartisan support and passed in 1996.

Since its inception more than 500 students have participated in this program. This year the Palos Verdes Unified School District begins its participation.

Support for the program comes from the California International Relations Foundation, Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Union Bank of California, NUMMI (New United Motor Manufacturing,

Inc.), Japan Airlines and a number of other Japanese companies.

Supporters of the program were recognized during the short program.

Although many of the Japanese students were shy trying to speak in English, it was obvious that they were having fun with their American counterparts. The students from Japan have been studying English.

This year 16 students from Martinez and seven from Palos Verdes visited Shizuoka from June 18 to July 2.

日米高校生交流事業開

SF総領事館でレセプション

九九七年以来、今年で八回目の日米高校生



日米高校生交流事業の歓迎レセプションに参加した生徒、教諭ら全員で記念撮影。8月2日、サンフランシスコ日本総領事館。

生交流事業がこのほど行われ、同交流事業の歓迎レセプションが二日、サンフランシスコ日本領事館の広報文化センターで開かれた。高校生および家族、学校関係者、州政府関係者、協力企業関係者らがレセプションに訪れた。同交流事業を支援した団体・企業はトヨタ・モーター・セールズ・USA、ユニオン・バンク・オブ・カリフォルニア、ニュー・ユナイテッド・モーター・マニユファクチャリング（NUMMI）、日本航空。また、大阪大学研究推進国際部国際交流課の辻敏彦さんらもモラル・サポートとして出席した。

九九七年から実施されている同プログラムでは、高校生らが互いの国を交互に訪れ、親善を図っている。日本から米国に渡るのは今年で四回目。今年は、大阪府から二十七人の生徒が七月二十三日から八月六日にかけて、カリフォルニアのエルクグロブ学校区を訪問した。行は高校授業、クラブ

活動参加、ホームステイ、州庁舎訪問などをした。

同レセプションでは、午後五時になると大阪府、カリフォルニアの高校生がぞくぞくと到着。司会の北澤剛領事が修学旅行気分を生徒らを鎮めるまで、会場は祭りの雰囲気だった。山中誠サンフランシスコ総領事は開会のあいさつで、「生徒らを見て、うらやましい気持ちでいっぱい。私が高校生の時は外国に行きたくても、なかなか実現できる時代ではなかった。両親や支援してくれた方々に感謝を忘れずに」と述べた。その後、日本、米国の高校からそれぞれの代表者がスピーチを行った。日本からは豊野祐介君が「最初は英語が分らず『YES, YES S』ばかりだったが、今では僕たちの間には（日米交流の）橋が見える」とにっこり。英語代表のヒロコ・マリエ・ワタナベさんは「私たちが日米間の友好な関係を築く懸け橋になれば」と力を込めた。その後、用意された日本食を楽しみながら、和気あいあいと親睦を深めた。同交流事業に参加した大阪府立千里高校の

杉田奈緒さん（17）はホームステイ中、生活の違いに戸惑いを見せながらも、「毎日が全部おもしろい。言葉だけでなく、ゲームでコミュニケーションを取ったりもする」と目を輝かせた。また、家では靴を脱がない、日本人と比べ米国人は人目を気にしない、使っている英語は日本の学校で習うものとは違うなどの意見もあった。大阪女学院高等学校の井上聡・教頭は、「多国籍が集まるカリフォルニアでは、中国語など、英語ではない言語を話す家族もホームステイ先に多く、生徒が孤立してしまうことがあった」と話す。しかし、今ではその問題も解決し、「こちらの人はとても親切にしてくれている。毎日、比較文化の話などをして楽しい」と話した。最後は全員が集まって記念撮影を行った。山中総領事は、「我々大人が頑張るより、こういった若い人たちによる個人レベルの交流の方が（日米親善には）効果的」と話す。同交流事業は、エルクグロブ、マルティネス、パロスベルデスの各学校区、日本からは大阪府、静岡県に加え、カリフォルニア州上院国際交流基金、サンフランシスコ日本総領事館などの協力で準備が進められ、多くの日系企業が毎年協力している。

マイ・タウン

地域
ニュース

Alumni News

July 7, 2005

Ezilda Samoville, Director
California Senate Office of International Relations
1020 N Street, Suite 516
Sacramento, CA 95814

I have been asked to write a few words about my experience as a student participant in the California – Osaka Scholars Exchange Program (now California - Japan Scholars Program). Unfortunately my message will be decidedly brief as I am currently in Osaka at the American Consulate General where I work as a pol / econ intern.

I came to live in my current residence because a friend of mine from the University of California, Berkeley – where I just received my undergraduate degrees in Japanese and political economy – happens to live in Osaka as well (he is pursuing a PhD in Japanese literature at Osaka University of Foreign Languages). My friend selected where to live based on something I only recently discovered I have in common with him: though he is three years my senior and from a different part of California than I, he also participated in the California - Japan Scholars Program and still keeps in contact with his host family who lives nearby.

While I cannot speak for my friend, I know for certain that were it not for the unique opportunities afforded by the State of California and Osaka Prefecture, I would not have become interested in Japan, I would not have studied Japan in the social sciences at Berkeley, I would not have gone on an exchange program in 2002-03, I would not be interning with the United States government in Osaka, and I would not be going to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in August to begin a PhD in Japanese politics.

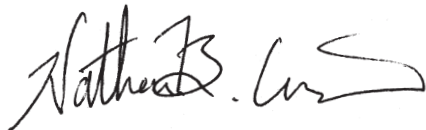
Path dependency is an important tool in studying any process. Decisions made now profoundly shape future possibilities. One can make a strong impression on seventeen-year-old children by allowing them to know things completely different from prior experiences. My joy as a student of Japan stemmed from referring back to initial impressions made in 1999 and understanding how the differences between our cultures that I saw are, more often than not, non-existent.

It is lucky, too, that I had a forceful Japanese teacher who understood the benefits of education abroad. A few significant disadvantages nearly prevented me from traveling to Japan, the more serious impediment being my financial situation. Without outside funding for an airline ticket, I would not have attended. My family gives me tremendous emotional support, but airline companies seem reluctant to redeem emotions for flights. My Japanese teacher helped me in innumerable ways to overcome both of these challenges.

Japan is vital to California's future prosperity. Our agriculture, information technology and entertainment are all well-received in Japan. However, in order for California to effectively represent its interests abroad it must have native sons and daughters who love their home state, as I do, and also possess a deep understanding of California's friends. We have many partners in East Asia, but Japan is truly our friend. With more students sharing the experiences I had, the California - Japan friendship can only grow.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Nathan Cisneros
Political / Economic Section, Osaka – Kobe Consulate General
California - Osaka Scholar Exchange Program – 1999

The California International Relations Foundation (CIRF)

The California Intentional Relations Foundation is a private non-profit public benefit corporation that has been organized under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Foundation provides assistance to the California Senate in furthering the exchange of economic, educational and cultural information between government leaders and other citizens of foreign countries and Members of California Legislature and other citizens of California.

Such exchanges include, but are not limited to, information relating to government, trade and commerce, agriculture, tourism, technology, education, environment, and the arts.

The Foundation provides for these exchanges by helping the California Senate arrange and host substantive programs in California for international delegations. The programs include appointments with government, education, and private sector officials; visits to various locales that showcase California's unique characteristics; and social activities that encourage cooperation through more informal discussion and communication.

In addition, the Foundation helps to organize and sponsor exchange programs, so that more American students can learn about the languages, political institutions and cultures of other countries, and students from other nations may become familiar with our own democratic principles, culture and representative system of government.

The Foundation is funded by private donations from businesses and individuals who are interested in forging stronger ties between California's government, educational and business leaders and leaders in other countries; strengthening our State's economic role in the international arena; and furthering educational and cultural exchanges between California and other countries.

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